but they take *'a* painful view of life'. They believe that life is a discipline whereby one is schooled in abstaining from taking a full plunge into the depths of life. Their consciousness is so undeveloped and stunted as to make them think that the enjoyment of life goes hand in hand with wickedness. To Wentworth, refinement means keeping one's self pure by running away from experience for fear of contamination and corruption. He does not understand that experience and involvement are necessary for the development of a flexible consciousness which can absorb the varying realities of human existence and take them in his stride. Only Gertrude Wentworth appreciates the need for experience and involvement. Her falling in love with Felix Young is an affirmation of her enthusiasm for a fully lived life.

Felix believes in taking life as it comes to him without ever being afraid of the dangers of involvement. The nature of the future life of Felix and Gertrude as man and wife would depend on their individual intellectual and moral resources. James pokes gentle fun at Wentworth's rigid and angular view of life. Wentworth's son Clifford, is suspended from college for his addiction to alcohol, and the father is unhappy and greatly concerned about the boy. Clifford "is-promptly sent to Mr. Brand, the Unitarian minister, to learn the -virtues of temperance. Felix advises Wentworth to send Clifford to •Eugenia, for he believes in the civilising and sobering influence of •women on men. Felix's belief is basically correct, although it is hasty to-generalise that ail women are civilising influences. Eugenia with all • her brilliance and polish is a corrupting influence. She abuses the virtues of European culture by using them as instruments of deception and greedy acquisition. Robert Acton sees through her false -nature and drops the idea of marrying her. For the American, life is a tale of missed or deliberately ignored opportunities; for the European, 'life is a tale of abuse of opportunities. James says that the refined

'consciousness of a refined culture would regard life as an opportunity
leavened with discipline and awareness.'

In *The Europeans,* James hints at the civilizing and sobering
• influence of women on men. In *Confidence,* he comes out with the
discovery that the sharp sensibility of a woman of intelligence and
•sympathy is yet another source of human refinement. Bernard and
-Gordon are very good friends. Gordon falls in love with Angela Vivian
in Baden-Baden, and summons Bernard for his opinion of the girl;